



OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

DAVID SLAYTON
Administrative Director

JUDGES, CLERKS, AND STAFF UNDER STAY-AT-HOME ORDERS Travel Authorization

Dated: March 26, 2020

The justice system is essential to the people. The need for access to the courts only increases in a disaster like the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Judges, clerks, and court staff should lead by example by working in ways that, for themselves, staff, litigants, and others, allow social distancing, avoid groups larger than permitted by local and state authorities, and encourage hand-washing and sanitary practices throughout the workplace. Judges, clerks, and court staff should consider alternatives to in-person meetings, should telework and require staff to telework whenever possible, and should minimize office operations. Judges, clerks, and court staff should not engage in activities merely for convenience or personal preference when other means, such as telephoning, tele- or video-conferencing, and online proceedings, are available.

But judges, clerks, and court staff must also be permitted to conduct court proceedings free from local stay-at-home orders and other restrictions on travel and business practices. **Judges, clerks, and court staff may travel and engage in activities reasonably necessary to conduct court proceedings as permitted for other essential services. Judges, clerks, and court staff may travel to and attend court proceedings and perform other related court and clerk operations. Stay-at-home and similar orders do not prohibit such travel and activities involved in these duties as long as every effort is made to avoid risks to the public health.**

Certified by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Slayton".

David Slayton
Administrative Director of the Courts
Texas Office of Court Administration